

MAP

MEMBERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



**COMMUNICATIONS
WORKERS**

of

AMERICA

DISTRICT 9

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL

MEMBERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Shelia Bordeaux, Chair SCC MAP

CWA MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

At A Glance

As a result of the passage of the 1988 Drug Free Workplace Act, the companies that CWA have Collective Bargaining Agreements with began initiating "Employee Assistance Programs" (EAP). For many years, CWA has had a Member's Assistance Programs (MAP). MAP is a union based Programs aimed toward providing members with assistance when life's problems cause an adverse affect on job performance and productivity. CWA has a vital interest in maintaining a safe, hostile free, healthy workplace for our members, free from the influence of violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, drugs and alcohol. We have trained MAP Coordinators/Counselors to understand laws and regulations relative to EAP issues, company and union policies and procedures, changes in the court decisions and how our members are affected (i.e., D.O.T. regulations) by these guidelines.

We provide quality assessments and referrals for, but not limited to:

Adolescent Issues

Community Support Groups

Counseling Family Issues

Domestic Violence

Drugs/Alcohol

Eating Disorders

Elder Care Medical Benefits

Gambling

Legal

Marriage

Medical Benefits

Sexual Addiction

CWA MAP Coordinators will:

- **Maintain confidentiality**
- **Act as a liaison between the member and the company**
- **Link and refer members and/or their family members to community resources and services**
- **Help eradicate feelings of intimidation**
- **Protect your contractual rights**

If you find yourself in a need and we may be of assistance, please contact your Local MAP Coordinator.

1-855-627-2778

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a crucial component of a successful Member Assistance Program. Besides being protected by public law, reasonable guarantees of confidentiality can provide the necessary incentives for the troubled worker to seek help without fear of retaliation or ridicule. The MAP committee should, in their consideration of confidentiality, institute and insist on strict measures, which guard against real or perceived breaks in confidentiality.

Participation in a MAP program often involves the disclosure of personal information. State and federal laws protect the confidentiality of this information in order to encourage individuals to step forward to seek treatment. This information can only be disclosed through the written permission of the MAP participant. There are extreme cases (life and death) where this information can be disclosed to the appropriate authority.

Although union representatives and supervisors have an important role, their access to information is limited to ensure confidentiality.

For example:

Union stewards and supervisors need to know:

- That an employee will be absent from work
- When an employee can be expected to return to work

Union stewards and supervisors DO NOT need to know:

- The type of assistance the member/employee needs
- The details or nature of the person's problem (s)
- The workers progress in treatment
- Proof of treatment participation/attendance
- Treatment facility location

NOTE: Even in the case of a disciplinary referral, a member has no need to release any information about his/her participation in the Members Assistance Program. Participation in the Members Assistance Program is not always an alternative to disciplinary action. The Company may still choose to move forward with disciplinary action.

**IT CAN NOT BE OVER EMPHASIZED THAT
MAINTAINING**

**STRICT
CONFIDENTIALITY**

IS NECESSARY TO MOTIVATE WORKERS

TO PARTICIPATE IN

THE MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

What is a MAP?

A MAP is a comprehensive workplace assistance program, dealing with policies and procedures for internal union handling of personal problems, which affect job performance.

There is training orientation and education sessions for union officials or representatives, supervisory personnel and our member's families.

Counseling sites are available for voluntary and confidential handling of worker and family problems.

Avenues for cooperative labor-management handling of workplace problems.

What Are MAP Services Used For?

- Coaching and consultation for labor-management representatives.
- Confidential problem assessment.
- Telephone counseling and crisis Management.
- Appointments with skilled union representatives.
- Referral to qualified professionals for assistance.

When Do I Use MAP?

- ❖ When in your role as a steward, foreman, business agent or employer, you observe a worker with a personal or work site problem.
- ❖ When negative feedback from others alerts you to a worker that may be having personal or work site problems.
- ❖ When you know a co-worker is in trouble, and you suggest MAP services.
- ❖ When management requires MAP services as a constructive alternative to normal disciplinary procedures. Or, when you or your family seeks the confidential services available through the MAP.

MAP Procedures

1. Members who need professional advice to solve life problems are encouraged to voluntarily use the union MAP.
2. Union representatives will help identify and assist bargaining unit members with help. Union representatives will also encourage workers to voluntarily use the MAP services to help themselves before supervisory confrontation becomes necessary.
3. Supervisors are responsible for confronting employees about their unsatisfactory performance and helping them to improve their work:
 - a. Supervisors will bring employees' unsatisfactory work to their attention and encourage them to solve the problem on their own or, with the help of the MAP/EAP services. Supervisors will also tell the employees that continued unsatisfactory performance could lead to formal discipline.

- b. If performance improves, no further action will be taken.
 - c. If job performance continues to be unsatisfactory, regardless of whether or not employees have accepted help, regular disciplinary procedures will be followed according to the collective bargaining agreement. At each step of the procedure, supervisors will encourage employees to seek help from the MAP/EAP service.
- 4. NO SUPERVISORS OR UNION REPRESENTATIVE WILL ATTEMPT TO DIAGNOSE THE CAUSE OF A WORKER'S PROBLEM.
 - 5. Union representatives and supervisors pledge to offer support and encouragement to individuals who voluntarily say they are seeking initial assistance.

Substance Abuse Is a Union Issue

Our members are important. When members are suffering from alcoholism or chemical dependency, they're sick and they need help. Getting the right treatment could save lives. We care about safety in the workplace. Everyone may feel sorry for people who are in trouble, and nobody wants to work next to, or rely on someone who's impaired. We have a duty to represent all of our members. People who suffer from alcoholism or drug dependency are likely to get into trouble on the job. It's going to be up to us to help them. The more we understand about the nature of their illness, and the faster we can get them effective treatment, the better we can do our jobs. We have a duty to make sure members' privacy rights don't get trampled in the rush to create drug-free workplaces. Although no one condones drug use, or any other illegal activity, the employer does not have the right to pry into employees' "after-work lives." As long as it doesn't affect job performance, members' private lives should be just that... private. We need to protect members' rights to due process and the grievance procedure. If a member's job performance is slipping, he/she should be warned and given the chance to improve. Progressive discipline and the right of appeal through the grievance procedure are important principles, which supervisors sometimes disregard in cases of chemical dependency. No one is certain why an individual ends up as an alcoholic or a drug addict. The roots of the illness may lie in our genes, our psychological make-up, the families in which we were raised, the environment in which we live or some combination of these factors.

This article is an excerpt from the AFL-CIO's "Helping to Overcome Addiction: A Union Representative's Guide for Dealing with Substance Abuse."

Everybody Wins

A Drug-free Workplace Program benefits the worker, the employer, the union, and Health Insurance cost.

The Workers

- Offers employees a healthy and safe work environment.
- Offers security in knowing that then co-workers, friends and colleagues are getting help for their problems.
- Resolves problems, so employees feel better about themselves and their families.
- Offers a Member Assistance/ Employee Assistance Program (MAP/EAP), which is free and confidential help for members/employees and their families.
- Provides access to appropriate referrals sources for employees who need ongoing help and support.

The Employers

- Helps reduce the chance that personal problems will affect job performance.
- Provides the opportunity to retain a good worker.
- Removes the employer from being in the position of either ignoring a problem or diagnosing a problem.
- Decreases the accident rate
- Encourages a more reliable and productive staff.
- Has a positive effect on the bottom line.

The Union

- Reminds workers that their union cares about them
- Makes it easier for the union to represent and find work for employees who might otherwise have a hard time maintaining employment.
- Provides employees with professional services through assessment and referrals rather than having union representatives attempt to solve personal problems.
- Helps to reduce disciplinary action grievances (s).
- Health Insurance
- Helps contain health care cost - an economic benefit for members/employees, unions and employers.
- Helps avoid the use of unnecessary or inflated cost.
- Helps reduce the number of health insurance and workers compensation claims.